/91/

533 Every two lines in this kind of song also constitute one unit. If seven-character lines follow in the sequence, singing will be done in the manner of singing songs composed of seven-character lines.

This is all that we know about the ways Miao songs are sung. If there are other ways of singing them, we are not aware of them at present.

(4)

538 The legends of the Miao may be divided into two classes: One comprises those which are indigenous, and the other comprises those which have been introduced from outside. This distinction is immediately apparent when we take a look at the contents of the legends. Moreover, the legends may be divided into two classes from the point of view of form: those which have the same form as the songs, and those which do not. The legends with the same form as the songs are either the texts of the civilian and military Taoist priests, or the various songs for social occasions. These are easily available, since they have been written down. As regards those legends which are not in song form, they have been handed down entirely through oral transmission, and collecting them is difficult.

Of those legends which are indigenous, the most interesting are the ones which explain the process of the creation of heaven and earth and the origin of their ancestors. Two of this kind will be recorded as follows:

539 773

(a) The Little Girl of Fu-chi Sings:

You, drummer, beat the drum of Yang-shou;
Beat the drum again and again.
Hark! The drum is turned to Yang —
The little girl of Fu-chi arrives at the center of the aerials:
Earlier you were at Fu-sang Temple.
The kung-ts'ao /"merit official"/ was ordered to send you an invitation.
At the invitation of your masters,
You rode on the royal horse and came to the site of the altar.

/92/

539
773

You dismounted in front of the Heavenly Hall.
You were received at the royal feast to sing your first graces.
You looked at the Emperor and the Empress before you began to sing,
To sing the song of the little girl of Fu-chi:
There is in the official records of the olden days: thunder fell to the ground.
Honorable Chang with his feet kept it in the heart of Ts'ang.
Honorable Thunder said to Honorable Chang:
"Take a basin of water and wash yourself all over.
Take a basin of water and ... all over.
I think it will work to get me out of the heart of Ts'ang."
When Honorable Thunder finally got out of Ts'ang,
He offered his teeth to acknowledge the favor.
The teeth he granted were the seeds of felicity —
In three generations all debts were redeemed.
Then there were a brother and his younger sister to whom Honorable Thunder said:
"Take a knife with sharpened edge and put it in the heart of the stove."
They took a knife with sharpened edge and put it in the heart of the stove.
Then they carried wood and water and put them into the heart of the stove.
When they had filled the stove with wood and water,
They had a dream that in the east there rose a cloud.
The cloud did not seem like a cloud,
It truly was an extraordinary cloud.
Rain fell for seven days and seven nights.
For seven days and seven nights it darkened heaven and earth.
For seven days and seven nights the Flood rose.
The stove was thrown up to the level of heaven.
After seven days and seven nights the Flood subsided;
And the stove fell into the Koulkun Mountains.
Next morning they got up early.

/92 cont'd/

539
773

They had seen in a dream that there was peace but there were no men.

/93/ When they walked past the foot of the /Koulkun/ Mountains,
They met Green Bamboo in the woods.
Then the brother and his younger sister inquired of Green Bamboo:
"Are there any people in the world?"
To the brother and sister Green Bamboo replied:
"There is not a single man in the world,
There is not a single ghost in heaven,
And there is not a single soul on earth,
As all men in the world were drowned by the flood."
He earnestly proposed that the brother and sister should become man and wife.
But the brother and sister were offended.
They chopped Green Bamboo's root with a big sword, and said:
"If you, Green Bamboo, grow together as before,
We, brother and sister, will get married and become man and wife.
If you do not grow whole again,
The world will certainly be without mankind."
If one walks past the foot of the Koulkun Mountains,
One will see the body of Mr. Green Bamboo:
Originally he was without nodes and joints —
Now one will see the scars left by the sister's sword.
Next morning they got up early.
As the cock crowed they ate breakfast, then again went into the woods.
There they inquired of Tortoise:
"Are there any people in the world?"
To the brother and sister Tortoise replied:
"There is not a single man in the world,
There is not a single ghost in heaven,
And there is not a single soul on earth,

/93 cont'd/

539
J73

As all men in the world were drowned by the flood."
He earnestly proposed that the brother and sister should become man and wife.
/94/ But the brother and sister were offended.
They chopped Tortoise with a big sword, and said:
"If you, Tortoise, grow whole as before,
We, brother and sister, will get married and become man and wife.
If one walks past the foot of the Koulkun Mountains,
One will see the reborn body of Tortoise:
Originally he had a smooth and shining shell —
Now one will see the sword scars there.
Then the hearts of the brother and sister were still unwilling.
They bought and burned incense whose fume rose up to the clouds.
They burned incense in two places;
The fumes of the two crossed and reached the heart of the sky.
They made a vow that they, brother and sister, would become man and wife,
And their marriage lasted spring after spring,
For three and five years as man and wife.
For three and five years they had no child.
Then they gave birth to a lump of blood.
They thought of a plan to make mankind from it.
They made people under three hundred and sixty surnames.
Half of them were officials and the other half were common people.
Mankind did not have rice to eat:
They ate leaves of trees and hearts of rattan.
Mankind did not have clothes to wear:
They used leaves of trees to make gowns and skirts /i.e., women's clothes/.
There were more men than women:
That is why there are bachelors in the world today.
There was once a mouse at the top of Tzu-wei Mountain.

539
J73

/94 cont'd/

He was looking around with a seed of grain in his mouth.
Shen Nung /legendary emperor, supposed teacher of husbandry/ took the seed and planted it.
That was the origin of grain.
/95/ That is why today there is enough to eat in the world,
Passed straight down for generations to the present.
Now whosoever believes in him will prosper.
Looking beyond the high mountains the sacred divine one will return.
Shen Nung will arrive at the temple to guard and bless us in person,
To protect us from calamities from heaven and eradicate suffering and ills according to the heart of heaven.
You, drummer, beat the drum of Yang-shou;
Beat the drum again and again.
Hark! the drum is tuned to Yang.
P'an Ku /legendary being who created the universe/ descends to the center of the aerials:
Earlier you were at Ch'ing-tsao Temple.
Because respect was bestowed on you by the masters, you were invited to sing your first graces.
At the words of invitation,
You rode on the royal horse and came to the scene of the aerials.
You dismounted in front of the Heavenly Hall.
You were received at the royal feast to sing your first graces.
You entered the feast and received a drink of An-ch'ih wine,
And sat at the feast and began to sing your first graces.
You looked at the Emperor and the Empress before you began to sing,
To sing of P'an Ku himself.
In the old, old times Emperor P'an Ku
Opened up the first day, in the person of P'an Ku himself.
There was not yet heaven nor earth,
No sun, no moon, nor that which is between heaven and earth.
But there was first the Jade Emperor, as it was told by P'an Ku.

/95 cont'd/

539 773 "The Jade Emperor and I were produced together.
We were not reared by a father and mother.
But we were born out of many-colored dark clouds.
The Jade Emperor evolved many changes in heaven.
He created heaven, earth, and all that which is between heaven and earth.
/96/ The Jade Emperor has three hundred and six transformations of his eyes.
P'an Ku had three hundred and six transformations of his body.
The left eye became the sun;
The right eye became the moon.
The earth on top of the mountains are what was on his head.
The fish in the deep waters are what was his liver and heart.
His teeth became money and jewels.
And his bones became great rocks.
His flesh became golden earth.
His red blood became flowing water in the rivers.
His fingernails became trees in the mountains.
His hands and feet became stars.
His stomach and entrails became the nine bright pearls.
His feet and toes became ponds and pools in the fields.
And the bones and flesh in his whole body were all changed,
The stars and trees were from his body.
Today he comes here to bless us in person,
To eradicate sickness and calamities according to the heart of heaven. (End)

539 (b) Song to be sung at the temple. (The following song is in the form of questions and answers. The words in the parentheses are the answering parts.)

(The first part of the song is omitted here.)

Who opened the sky and established the earth? (Prince P'an)
How many pillars were used in making heaven and earth? (Five)
How many chang between heaven and earth? (Ninety thousand)

/101 cont'd/

533 the flood, the coming into existence of mankind, the life story of
538 P'an Ku /The Creator/, the evolutionary process of social systems,
173 and the origin of their ancestors, etc. Moreover, there is another interesting legend of the Miao which tells the story of their ancestors. This is not in song form. It is given here as follows:

539 Once upon a time there lived a certain wealthy man who had a
773 daughter. But the wealthy man's daughter was betrothed to an extremely poor family. When she was of marriageable age, she still was not yet married. It so happened that the daughter had a pet dog. She was so fond of her dog that she ate and slept with him. In time she had sexual relations with the dog and became pregnant. When her fiance's family became aware of this, they informed the authorities. The official investigated the case from many angles, but failed to identify the party who had wronged her. Eventually, the official's wife thought of a scheme. She took the daughter out of jail and took the girl to live with her in her own room. In the middle of night when the daughter was fast asleep, the official's wife opened up the girl's clothes and found marks of scratches by dog claws on her body. The whole mystery was thus unveiled. Thereupon the district official questioned the members of the girl's family. It was found that the girl actually had a pet dog. He then ordered that this dog be taken to be with the girl at the jail. Sure enough when night fell, the dog was actually found to scratch fiercely at the girl. The whole case was thus solved. When the fiance's family learned that the girl had had relations with the dog and had thus become pregnant, they cancelled the betrothal unconditionally. After being released from jail, the girl soon gave birth to a boy and a girl. Greatly disgraced by this scandal, the girl's parents ordered a carpenter to build a boat and loaded it with gold, silver, gems, and pearls. The daughter, dog, and the two children were driven into the boat and set afloat. The boat floated about and drifted to the city of Hui-chou, where it was caught and pulled to land by some people. Then the four of them settled in this city. The dog often went to the mountains to capture birds and animals to feed the two children. The children gradually grew up but still did not know

/101 cont'd/

539 they were children of a dog. One day /102/ when the dog, feeling
773 lazy, did not go to the mountains to hunt, he was beaten by the two children. Upon this, their mother scolded them severely and told them the truth. She said that they were born of her union with the dog and that the dog was in fact their father. She further told them that since they were children of a dog, nobody would ever want to marry them. It was thus wise that they should marry each other in order to continue the line. After the brother and sister were married, they had two boys. When they grew up, the two boys were not able to get along with each other and often quarreled. Their mother became disgusted and drove them out. One fled up to the mountain, and the other down to the sea. The one who went up the mountain became the ancestor of the Miao; the one who went down to the sea became the ancestor of the Tanka /boat people of Canton/. Henceforth, the descendants of these two groups have not walked on the prince's land nor paid taxes.

773 This legend gives us a picture of how the ancestors of the Miao were symbolically conceived of by them (i.e., born of a dog), what kind of economic life they led at the beginning (i.e., hunting), and what kind of marriages between those of the same blood originally existed among them (i.e., marriage between brother and sister), and also what the relationship between the two groups, Miao and Tanka, was like, etc. What important implications all this revealed to us in our study of the Miao social system!

538 As regard to the legends which were brought to the Miao from outside, these are numerous. Due to limited space here, only the following sample, which consists of a section of the sad and romantic story of a Mr. Yen Hui and a Miss Chang Meng-wo is given here:

539

The Ancient Song of Meng-wo

Speaking at leisure of old tales and books,
Let me sing the story of Meng-wo.
Thousands of other old tales have been told over and over again,
Let me sing now the story of Meng-wo:

/160 cont./

*782 784 776 627 778 are all forbidden. After the prohibitions are lifted and the sacrificial beasts presented, normal life may be resumed. The Miao are very much in awe of this shen. If one has drunk blood and taken an oath in a T'ien Wang temple, one would not dare to repudiate it. There are many T'ien Wang temples in the Miao area, the largest of which is at Ya-ch'i, Kan-ch'eng (Illus. 69), which is regarded by the Miao as holy ground. A Miao village without a T'ien Wang temple sometimes may request the T'ien Wang to come to the village to decide a case. He may also be 627 asked to go on an inspection tour, as in Illus. 70, showing the T'ien Wang of Hsin-chai, Feng-huang, who was asked to go to another village to decide a case.

Besides the two days of sacrifice to T'ien Wang before the Hsiao-shu period, the Miao may also write complaints, secret accusations, etc., and make vows to T'ien Wang at other 731 755 691 times in the event of danger, such as the ravages of soldiers and rebels, serious illness, or losing a lawsuit. A table is set up in an empty room, and on it are placed five teacups and a piece of tile. Chaff and beeswax as well as paper money are burned. The suppliant kowtows and makes a vow, and invokes the protection of the shen. In the vow he promises a pig or a goat, or both, or /Illus. 69 and 70 on pp. 161, 162/ /163/ an ox, depending upon the seriousness of his problem and his financial condition. A sorcerer-priest is also asked to come to the house to make the vow if the purpose is important. The table set at the 691 731 755 time of making the vow is not removed until the time the vow is fulfilled. If the case is won, or the patient recovers, or no distress is caused in time of war, the vow must be fulfilled. The things promised may be increased but not decreased. Even if the results shown are not as expected, still the vow must be fulfilled, but in this case the things promised may be reduced.

● 773 776 What shen after all is this White Emperor T'ien Wang? Stories vary. According to Miao Fang-pei Lan, Volume 22, there are three stories. The first was about the three sons of T'ien-chiang of the Han period; the second was about the three sons of the Bamboo King; and the third story was about the three brothers of

/163 cont./

773 776 Yang Ming-lai. (1) Yen Ju-yü is of the opinion that the third

> 1. Among the Miao there is a story to the effect that Yang's three brothers were the sons of a little frog, who were poisoned afterwards. (See the chapter, "Folk Tales," 1) Myths, 13) The Little Frog /not translated/.

story is more credible. However, the Yang brothers were the generals of the Sung Dynasty who subdued the Miao, and could not have won such high respect from the Miao. The present writers are of the opinion that the second story is relatively more credible. According to the Kan-chou T'ing Chih: "It is said that the mother saint met a dragon shen at Lung-ching-pa, Ya-ch'i, and became pregnant, giving birth to three marquis, who were braver than any man, and became generals." This story is identical to the story of the Bamboo King. Yen thinks that this story cannot be true, because Yeh-lang is located near today's Shih-nan, far from Wu-ch'i. But he ignores the fact that the Miao now in the three sub-prefectures mostly came from Kweichow, and the Bamboo King having a long historical relation with the Miao can therefore inspire devotion and awe from them.

(4) Ma-yang Ta Wang

*782 776 [753] [731] [372] [82] When a Miao has a strange sickness or comes across a strange event, he offers sacrifices to this shen, for sickness is considered to be an outer manifestation of some impending disaster. If sacrifices are not offered, a greater calamity will occur. Sacrifices are also offered in the event of a fire or of a meteor in the sky. The Miao think that fire is caused by a meteor falling in pieces, and so then they sacrifice to this shen. If it falls intact on earth it becomes a coffin, and they sacrifice to Lu-pan (see later). Ma-yang Ta Wang is a wicked shen with

/178 cont./

175 dynasties, the records contain many references to it. The
*782 ancient meaning of No was to drive away the kuei of pestilence.
776 In the Lun Yü I Su, Liang Huang-k'an says: "The no-no sound is uttered to fight the kuei of pestilence." In the Chou Li and the "Yüeh Ling" section of the Li Chi, no is written with the character nan /'difficult'/, while Chiao Te-hsing used the character yang /'to drive out demons'/. They must be the same word. (1)

[113]

1. See Chiang Liang-fu: No K'ao /The Study of No/, in Min Tsu, Vol. 2, No. 10.

Cheng Hsüan makes the commentary: "Yang is a powerful kuei." Liu Pao-nan in his Lun yü Cheng I says: "The powerful kuei are the kuei of pestilence.... When we refer to the kueis' name, we say yang; when we speak of driving these kuei away, then we say no. Afterward the name of the kuei was used for the name of the sacrifice." Today, however, when the Miao fulfill a vow to the
776 No shen, it is something quite different. They consider the
*782 brother and sister in the story of the Flood (see the chapter, "Folk
[773] Tales," /not translated/) to be the No shen, calling them Duke No and Mother No. When the members of a family have trouble, such as the six domestic animals not increasing, the five grains not being fruitful, financial misfortune, the prevalence of pestilence, and other calamities, quarrels, and seeing extraordinary
*[787] phenomena, if the sorcerer-priest finds through divination that the trouble is due to the No shen having been offended, it becomes necessary to promise to fulfill a vow to the No shen. Moreover,
[842] a family without children wishing to seek a child must seek to fulfill a vow to the No shen;[1] and if a family at the end of the year has lived contentedly without any trouble, it also considers this a gift of the No shen, and must make a vow to the No and fulfill it.

*782 The time for fulfilling vows to the No is between the ninth day of the ninth lunar month and the end of the lunar year, which may be said to be the season for fulfilling vows. It may also take

1 [for this ritual see cat. 116, pp 277-280. - ANALYST]

/185 cont./

*782 *[787] to utter the chien-ling, chiao-na, kou-hsiao, t'ui-hsia, and shou-ling incantations. For each of these incantations the sheng chiao is sought, but for kou-hsiao the yin chiao will do. After the incantations are over, the gong and drum are sounded and the horn is blown. Then the horn is placed in the crook of both arms (as in the rituals for seeking a son and wheeling in money). The helpers burn the paper money, and the sorcerer does the three-step walk, simultaneously uttering the wheeling in money incantation. After a passage he turns toward the door, blows the horn once, and continues to recite another passage. He then turns toward the inside, blows the horn, and chants again, and again blows the horn. After the incantation is over, the sorcerer takes a rest. The helpers and the host and his relatives eat supper together, /186/ which is known as Hsia Ma Fan /the meal taken after dismounting from a horse/.

*782 533 The thirteenth part is the singing of the No song. The sorcerer-priest in his red headkerchief sits in front of the Peach Spring cave, while assembled friends and relatives of the host also sit in a circle in front of the cave. First the sorcerer begins to sing the No song, followed by each of the friends and relatives in turn, and then all in unison. There is no fixed length to the verses nor a fixed number of singers. The singing goes on until no one continues it, when they consider it ended. The texts of the verses cover a wide area. In addition to the verses telling of the No shen's virtues and requesting good fortune, and those for driving away misfortune, calamities, and difficulties, there are the "Song of the Origin of the No Shen" and the "Song of Duke No and Mother No," relating the story of the origin of the No shen. (See the chapter, "Folk Tales," 1. The Myth about the Flood /not translated/.) The Miao think that [773] [776] Duke No and Mother No were brother and younger sister and that the Miao today are the descendants from the marriage between these two. (1) In addition they also sing and perform

[113]

1. See Ruey Yih-fu: Miao Tsu Hung Shui Ku Shih yü Fu Hsi Nü

1 [of the Huan No Yüan ceremony - ANALYST]

/187 cont./
grains will be abundant and resources will increase, and last he seeks the expulsion of the five pestilences, the hundred kuei, bandits, thieves, and all kinds of strange phenomena. After this, he inverts the two chiao-tzu on the tablet. Next he utters the incantation about the origin of the chiao-tzu. He says that the chiao-tzu originally were three persons: the yin chiao had the surname Hsiao, the yang chiao, Kuo, and the sheng chiao, Tu. All three received offerings from humans at the place of the No Shen. When the incantation is finished, he picks up the willow towel and rises together with the host. The helpers gather up the bedding and the rice straw.

/188/ The sixteenth part is K'ai Tung /"opening the cave"/. The sorcerer, with the red headkerchief and holding two hsien-feng banners in his hands, does the three-step walk at the front of the main hall and sings the magic K'ai Tung words, asking the shen of the drama to emerge from the cave. After the singing, the gong and drum are struck, and the ritual terminates.

The seventeenth part is Pan Hsien Feng /"impersonating fairies"/. The sorcerer wears women's clothes and head ornaments to disguise himself as a woman and holds a hsien-feng banner or a fan. (If there are more than two pigs and two goats in the host's house, two females are impersonated.) The sorcerer-priest walks before the Peach Spring cave in a semicircle, singing out first the reasons why he has come to the No hall. Then he continues to sing about what he has seen in the hall, and asks to see the host to say some words of good luck. Then he sings to tell about the origin of hsien-feng. Finally, he bids the shen farewell. He accompanies the singing with movements of his hands and feet. After each passage of the singing, the gong and drum are sounded a few times and he moves several steps.

The eighteenth part is Pan Sung Tzu /"performing the handing over of a son"/. A square table is set up before the Peach Spring cave. The sorcerer-priest in the apparel for the Pan Hsien Feng, stands on the table, holding the image of the No child in his hand, and sings the song of farewell of the

/194 cont./

771 Thus, on the basis of what Frazer and Malinowski have said,
789 we can clearly distinguish between Miao magic and religion.
For example, in the event of a drought, formerly the Miao
[931] would ask their sorcerer-priest to catch the dragon in order to
[782] seek rain, but now they offer sacrifices to the thunder kuei in
[821] order to seek rain. The former is magic, and the latter is religion, because catching the dragon to seek rain is the work of a magician to get power, by ritual and incantation, to directly control nature: whether the end is reached or not, whether it will rain or not, is the responsibility of the magician. Offering sacrifices to the thunder kuei to seek rain requires
[776] only the completion of the necessary prayer and ritual: whether there will be rain or not lies within the power of the spirits and beyond the reach of man. After having studied the various kinds of rituals for sacrifices to the kuei in the foregoing sections, we can see that the magic of the Miao in Hunan has largely progressed to the realm of religious acts, magic itself having lost its practical value, but religion still carries with it some imprints of magic. Therefore, the religion of the Miao in Hunan may be called magical religion. But aside from magical religion, there is still preserved a small amount of pure magic. As stated above, magic is a practical technique, and so the magic now still preserved among the Miao in Hunan has its practical value. The magic of controlling nature, such
● [773] as rain and wind, animals and vegetables, no longer exists today, except in their folk tales, where traces of it may still be found. The magic now preserved by the Miao may be divided
[755] into two kinds: 1) hua shui /drawing water/, which is a form
[754] of white magic used to cure sickness; 2) fang ku /letting go insects/, which is a form of black magic used to make people sick.

/235 cont./
857 is smeared on it. After a number of days it is washed away,
304 revealing the tattooed design, the color of which remains permanently.

517 The adult amusements of the Miao, such as shaking the
526 dragon lantern, shaking the lion, boxing, and tilting are the
[177] same as those of the Chinese /Illus. 117-20, pp. 236-38/,
[411] /239/ and probably were introduced by the latter. But one kind of their tilting, in which a weapon called tz'u-ch'a /"stabbing prong"/ (Illus. 119), is used, is not often seen. According to Miao legend, this is a weapon for stabbing tigers.

(4) Swings

526 Among the Miao there is a swing game, which is quite
[527] interesting. On farm holidays when there are fairs or during the New Year festival, they put up frameworks for swings on a vacant lot. Each framework supports two swings, and every swing has four compartments, each fastened with ropes and a board. Each swing seats four men or women, going around,
[533] with the wheel (Illus. 120). Men and women sing back and forth as they swing along (see chapter, "Folk Songs" /not
539 translated/). The following song is about the origin of the
•773 swing:
526

Songs and singing are as old as time,
Found in all books everywhere.
A son of a unicorn was born in the
Sung dynasty.
The young man with a clever mind sought
a mate.

He searched for a beauty but was
ashamed of his own ugliness.
He loved beauty but beauty was
hard to meet.
He asked someone for a plan.
And was told to make a swing for people
to enjoy.

[text continues on p 356]

/239 cont./

539
526
773

Shouting, he made known his invitation.
A maid from the Sleeping Tiger Mountain,
Came to ride on the eight-men swing.
She was loved by all present.
Soon, a go-between was found —
Man and wife were joined together for a
hundred years.

576 one another's left shoulder and asking "*Dieh zao nioh gioh?*"—"Are you well?" An adult greets children by rubbing or patting his or her head. The form of farewell is (the host) "Go slowly, go slowly" (the parting guest) "Sit slowly, sit slowly". 574 181 They are wonderfully hospitable and guests are expected to eat to satisfy. How often the traveller sees them stuff away basin after basin of maize until he fears there will be a terrible accident! People will go short themselves so that visitors be generously treated. Should a guest be of some importance a goat or sheep is slain and cooked—it is not always meticulously clean—and upon the departure of the guest a leg of the animal is always given to him. A non-observance of this custom would be a serious breach of good manners, as also it would be to refuse food to even a casual visitor. Hospitality is as characteristic of them as of the Arab, and a Miao will borrow food to entertain a guest. Though poor, thriftless and no lovers of fighting, they are simple and generous, honest and lovable. One of the child races of the world, they are as old as the Chinese, and when Moses led the children of Israel through the wilderness, the Miao were hunting wild beasts on their beloved hills and at the close of day their bards would sing a Miao version of the Creation, the Flood, and the Re-population of the World; and story-tellers would narrate quaint legends which have been handed down to this generation. Here is one. Would not Kipling have enjoyed it?

• 773 539 Long, long ago, instead of there being only one

sun in the skies, there were six, and in those days the world was beautifully warm. One year, however, the rain refused to come and by degrees all vegetables and trees were withered. A meeting of the old men was held to discuss what could be done. One man said this and another that until it was finally decided that the suns must be shot. A famous archer called Yang Yah was called and ordered to shoot the suns. Bringing his cross-bow and arrows, Yang Yah looked up at the suns and observed they were a long distance away. Fortunately, near by, there was a small lake in which all six suns were reflected and the happy thought came to Yang Yah that if he could shoot the reflections the same purpose would be served as hitting the suns themselves. Adjusting an arrow and taking careful aim, he released the trigger and hit sun number one right in the centre, upon which sun number one promptly disappeared. He shot a second arrow and sun number two disappeared, and so on with suns number, three, four and five, but as Yang Yah adjusted his arrow to shoot sun number six, this sun became vastly afraid and away it went beyond the horizon. The next morning—well, really there wasn't a next morning, as the sun refused to come out and day after day darkness was upon the face of the earth. To bring water from the springs people had to carry torches, and to plough the land, lights were suspended from the horns of the cows. What was to be done? A second gathering of the old men of the tribe was held; once more one man suggested this and another

773
539 suggested that, until finally it was proposed that some one should call to the sun and ask him to come out, assuring him that no one would shoot him. But how were they to call to the sun? It was thought that a tiger would be able to do this rather well; so one was brought and loudly it roared. "Dear me!" thought the sun, "the people are still angry with me, I won't go out yet." Then some one wondered whether it wouldn't be a good thing to use a cow to call to the sun. The lowing of a cow is far-reaching and yet not so frightening as the roar of a tiger. So a cow was brought and loudly it lowed. "Aha!" thought the sun, "they are not quite so displeased with me as they were, but they are still angry; so I won't go out yet." Then some one had the happy idea of using a cock; the crow of a cock is far-reaching yet pleasing, and being placed on a perch, it crowed lustily. "What a very nice sound that is," thought the sun, "I'll just look out to see what is happening," and he peeped over the horizon. People were so pleased to see him that they shouted for joy. The sun was quite as delighted as the people, and from the red of the morning he fashioned a little comb which he placed on the head of the cock. Now every morning, before the sun comes out, the cock crows to tell him it is all right, no one will shoot him.

7: Clarke M[illegible]3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE

773
538

Who made heaven and earth?
Who made insects?
Who made men?
Made male and made female?
I who speak don't know.

Vang-vai (Heavenly King) made heaven and earth.
Zie-ne made insects.
Zie-ne made men and demons,
Made male and made female.
How is it you don't know?

How made heaven and earth?
How made insects?
How made men and demons?
Made male and made female?
I who speak don't know,

Heavenly King is (or was) intelligent.
Spat a lot of spittle into his hand,
Clapped his hands with a noise,
Produced heaven and earth.
Tall wild grass made insects.
Stones made men and demons.
Made male and made female.
How is it you don't know?

Made heaven in what way?
Made earth in what way?
Thus by rote I sing,
But don't understand.

Made heaven like a sun-hat.
Made earth like a dust-pan.
Why don't you understand?
Made heaven a single lump,
Made earth a single lump.

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

773
538

Who put heaven up?
Heaven then so very high.
Who separated earth low down?
Earth then deep and low.
I sing and don't understand.

The poem then goes on to relate how heaven and earth were kept apart after they were separated. They tried all sorts of wood and all sorts of metal, and at length decided to prop up heaven with pillars made of silver. But where were they to get fire to melt the silver? Fire had gone up to heaven; how were they to bring it down? Fire eventually came down from heaven in a stone, and with raw steel and tinder they extracted the fire from the stone. After heaven had been propped up with silver pillars, the sun and moon and milky-way were fixed in their places. The sun, however, went away and would not come back. Thereupon they sent various beasts and birds to call the sun to return, but they would not go; or if they went, the sun refused to come at their call. Finally, they sent the cock to call the sun to return, and when the cock crew the sun came back. The poem concludes that the proof of this is that when the cock crows the sun rises!

"Heavenly King" is a translation of *Vang-*

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

"HEAVENLY KING" IS A TRANSLATION OF VANG-

vai, the two words used as the name of the Creator. In this legend it is very interesting to note how clearly and simply they say "Heavenly King made heaven and earth." This is so different to the elaborate and confused cosmogeny of the Chinese as to compel the opinion that we have here a very old tradition, and one which they did not learn from the Chinese. The stanzas given above contain all that is said of the Heavenly King. In the rest of the poem, of more than a thousand lines, *Zie-ne* and others in turn come upon the scene and do things, but who these were, or if Zie-ne is another name for the Creator, we have not been able to discover. But we feel almost sure that Zie-ne is an earthly person and not the Heavenly King. There is a word *ne* of the same tone which means "land," generally "low-lying land." If it is the same word, then Zie-ne means "earthly Zie" and must be distinguished from "Heavenly Vang." Zie may merely be a name. In the legend of the Deluge, "Zie" or "A-Zie" is the only male survivor. "A" is a very common prefix to names and relationships.

In the Heh Miao metrical version of the Flood, that catastrophy was in consequence of a quarrel between the two brothers A F'o and

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

773 A-Zie. *F'o* means "thunder," but as we have just mentioned above, we do not know what *Zie* means. These two fell out about the division of the family possessions, a very common source of ill-feeling among the Miao and others. Thunder evidently lived above, probably in heaven, and A-Zie lived on earth. When Thunder threatened to destroy the earth with a deluge, A-Zie hollowed out a large gourd for himself, and collected a hundred kinds and a thousand sorts of seeds, and put them in a smaller gourd.

After the Flood, when the earth dragon had swallowed up all the water, and the hill dragon all the mist, the earth was again habitable. As all the people on the earth had been destroyed, and they were the only persons surviving, A-Zie asked his sister to be his wife. How this sister had been preserved is not clear in the Heh Miao version. She declined to be his wife on the ground that such a marriage was not proper. When A-Zie insisted, his sister proposed that each of them should take a millstone, and going to the top of adjacent hills should roll them down into the valley below. If these should be found together in the valley, one over the other after the manner of millstones, she would consent to marry him,

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

but if they were found apart she would not be his wife. 773

Now this A-Zie was a very crafty fellow, and thinking how very improbable it was that two stones rolled from adjacent hills should thus come together, he secretly procured two other millstones, and put them one upon the other in the valley. The millstones that the brother and sister rolled from the hill-tops were lost in the brushwood, but when they came down into the valley, A-Zie showed his sister the two stones he had placed in the position required, and claimed that she should be his wife. She, however, was not yet satisfied, and demanded another appeal to chance or overruling providence. She suggested that a scabbard for two knives should be placed in the valley, and each of them taking a knife should hurl them from the adjacent hill-tops into the valley. If both knives were found in the scabbard, she would be his wife; if otherwise, she would not.

A-Zie, again thinking it very improbable that the knives would be thrown into the scabbard from such a great distance, surreptitiously put two other knives in the scabbard. The knives thrown from the hill-tops were, as he expected, lost, but when they came

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

773 down into the valley, he showed her the two knives in the scabbard and she finally consented to be his wife. In course of time a child was born to them without any limbs. A-Zie was very angry, and taking a big knife killed the child, chopped it to bits, and scattered the bits all over the hill-side. Next morning they discovered that these pieces had all changed into men and women, and thus the earth was repeopled.

Part of this legend may, as an illustration of all, be given in a rough translation of the Metric Version:

773
538

Zie demanded his sister in marriage,
His sister spoke,
Spoke how?
Thus by rote I sing,
Still don't understand.

Then his sister spoke,
You want to marry your sister;
Lift up a millstone each opposite,
Let go to roll to the valley;
(If) they roll and make one,
You marry your sister.
If the stones rest apart in the valley,
(We) both go and rest in our own place.
So his sister spoke,
Spoke words thus,
Why don't you understand?

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

773
538

Let the stones go into the valley;
Did the stones then make one (or)
Did the stones rest apart?
I who sing don't know.

The stones rested apart.
Zie contrived wickedly,
Put stones in the valley,
Called his sister to come
To see the stones become one.
A-Zie then spoke,
Now we two will marry,
Spoke words thus,
Why don't you understand?

His sister again spoke,
Spoke words nicely,
How did she speak?
Thus by rote I sing,
Still don't understand.

His sister again spoke,
Take knives each on a separate hill,
Throw the knives into the valley;
(If they) enter into one sheath,
We two will marry.
(If) the knives rest apart,
We will rest apart.
So his sister spoke,
Spoke words thus,
Why don't you understand?

A-Zie then hit on a plan,
Made up his mind what to do,
He would have his sister for wife.
Thus by rote I sing,
Still don't understand.

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

773
538

A-Zie then hit on a plan,
He made his heart wicked,
Made two pairs of knives,
He placed knives in the valley,
(They) rested apart.
Threw and went into the grass,
(He) called his sister to come
To see the two knives in a pair.
Now we two will marry,
He would have his sister for wife,
Why don't you understand?

Would have his sister for wife,
The two returned home.
Who did they ask (about it)?
Commanded what?
So the two got married.
Thus by rote I sing,
Still don't understand.

So the two returned home,
And asked their Mother,
Their Mother then said,
Heaven has no people,
Earth has no people,
You two must marry.
Kill buffaloes, kill cows, receive guests,
Hang meat on the branches of the "Zan" tree,
Call your brother cousin,[1]
Hang meat on the branches of the "Ma sang" tree,
Call your Mother mother-in-law,
So their Mother spoke,
Spoke words thus,
And the two got married.
Why don't you understand?

[1] Not a human being but a genius or fairy; the same with the guests.

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

773 ●
838

So the two got married,
Afterwards they had a child,
Had a child, what sort?
Thus by rote I sing,
Still don't understand.

Afterwards they had a child,
Had a child like a hammer,
Why don't you understand?

They had a child which had no arms or legs—this is why they say it was like a hammer.

Had a child like a hammer,
Zie saw, did Zie love it?
Thus by rote I sing,
Still don't understand.

Zie saw and did not love it,
Zie saw and Zie got angry,
Why don't you understand?

A-Zie was full of anger,
Took the child and did what?
Thus by rote I sing,
Still don't understand.

A-Zie was full of anger,
Zie drew out a great knife,
Took the child and chopped it up,
Why don't you understand?

Zie took the child and chopped it up,
Where did he throw (the pieces)?
Flesh went and got a name,
What did they become and what were they called?
Thus by rote I sing,
Still don't understand.

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

773
538

He sowed them on the hill,
In the morning they became people,
Thus they got a name,
What they became so they were called,
Why don't you understand?

773 Mr. H. J. Hewitt had the same story told him, in a different way, by the Hua Miao. Years ago they told me their story, but I did not write it down; so here is Mr. Hewitt's version.

According to this, two brothers ploughed a field one day, and next morning found the soil all replaced and smoothed over as if it had never been disturbed. This happened four times, and being greatly perplexed they decided to plough the field over once more and observe what happened. In the middle of the night while the brothers were watching, one on one side of the field and the other on the other side, they saw an old woman descend from heaven with a board in her hand, who, after replacing the clods of earth, smoothed them with the board. The elder brother at once shouted to the younger one to come and help him to kill the old woman who had undone all their work. But the younger brother suggested that they should first ask her why she did this and put them to so much trouble. So they

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

773

asked the old woman why she had acted so, and made them labour in vain. She then told them it was useless for them to waste time in ploughing land as a great flood was coming to drown the world. She then advised the younger brother, because he had been kind to her and prevented the elder brother killing her, to save himself in a huge wooden drum. He was to cut down a tree, hollow it out from the bottom upwards, and nail a piece of skin over the opening. She told the elder brother, because he had wished to kill her, to make for himself an iron drum. They were each to retire into their respective drums when the flood came.

When the flood came and the waters rose, the younger brother invited his sister to take refuge in his drum, and she did so. The elder brother was drowned in his iron drum, but the younger brother and his sister were safely preserved in the wooden one. The waters rose half-way up to heaven, and so high were the brother and sister carried in the hollow tree. With the rush of water they were carried hither and thither, and the tree at length was seen by one of the Genii of heaven, who thought it was some huge creature with as many horns as the tree had branches. He was very much alarmed, and said: "I have only twelve horns,

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

• 773 but this thing has many more; whatever shall I do?" Thereupon he cried out for the dragon, lizards, tadpoles, and eels to clear out the channels and make holes for the waters of the flood to recede, and thus deliver him from the monster with so many horns.

Through the efforts of the dragon and his crew, after twenty days the waters subsided, and the hollow tree stuck half-way down a steep and dangerous precipice. Then it came to pass that an eagle built its nest and hatched two young ones. This suggested a mode of deliverance from their difficult situation to the young man. He plucked some hair from his head, plaited a small cord, and with this tied the wings of the young eagles so that when they were fledged they were unable to fly.

The mother-bird was much perplexed when in due time her young ones could not fly, and went to consult a fairy about it. The fairy said, "Go and ask the stem of the tree near to which your nest is built, and it will tell you what to do. In return for this you must take the tree and fly away with it down to the ground." So the bird flew back to its nest, and addressing the tree, said: "Let my young ones fly, I pray thee." The man in the tree replied, "If I let them fly will you carry me down to the ground

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

in safety?" The eagle promised to do so, and the young man at once unfastened the cords he had tied round the wings of the young eagles, and they were immediately able to fly. Then the eagle took the tree, with the brother and sister in it, and flew with it down to the ground. 773

On coming out from their late abode, these two survivors found themselves in great straits. They had no companions, no fire, and no rice to eat. The brother seeing a red bird not far from him, picked up a piece of old iron and struck at it. The bird flew away, and the iron struck a rock which gave forth a spark. Thus they discovered the way to get fire, and having gathered some dry stalks, they made a fire at which they warmed themselves.

Finding no other human beings on the earth, the brother proposed to his sister that they should be man and wife. Here also the sister was unwilling, and here also the matter was to be decided by the two millstones as in the Heh Miao story; but in the Hua Miao version it was the brother who proposed that test. Here also the millstones were found in the valley one upon the other, but nothing is said about the way in which the brother deceived his sister. For a second trial the sister was to

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

• 723 take a needle and the brother a piece of thread and throw them into the valley; if the needle was found threaded in the valley, it was agreed they should marry. The needle was found threaded in the valley, and so they became man and wife. When their child was born without arms and legs, they appealed to the fairy about it, who told them to cut up the child in a hundred pieces, and throw the pieces in a hundred different places. They did this, and next morning all these pieces had turned into men and women, who took their names from the things on which the pieces had fallen. Thus one was called Water, another Wood, another Stone, and so on. Hence the "hundred families,"[1] and this is how the earth was re-peopled and how people got their names.

The Ya-ch'io Miao, three or four days south of Kweiyang, also tell the Story of the Flood. They also tell of a brother and sister, the only survivors, who were saved in a huge bottle gourd they had hollowed out for themselves. They also tell the story of the millstones, but as the second test they mention two trees. If both bore fruit, they would marry; if one bore fruit and the other did not, they would not

[1] The Chinese Book of Names is called *Peh-chia-sing* or "Hundred Family Names."

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

773

marry. Finally, they married and had two children, who were born mute and without arms or legs. These they cut in pieces, and the pieces turned into men and women.

The Ya-ch'io Miao say the man's name was Bu-i, and his sister's name Ku-eh ("eh" like "i" in "Sir"). When talking Chinese they call Bu-i "Fu-hsi," who is sometimes called the Chinese Noah. *Bu* probably means "ancestor," and *I* means "one" or "first," and thus *Bu-i* almost certainly means "First Ancestor." In the name of the sister, *Ku* may mean "ancient," and *eh* means "water." The Miao, as we have mentioned, have no characters which would help to settle the meaning of a word. As in Chinese, they have many words pronounced exactly the same, but with very different meanings, so Chinese students, at all events, will understand why it is not wise to dogmatise about the meaning of Miao names. Besides, my Ya-ch'io Miao vocabulary is very limited, but future students might bear these points in mind.

The Ya-ch'io Miao say that P'an-ku divided heaven and earth. P'an-ku in their own language they call Wa-Ku-lo. Now the Chinese are by no means clear or unanimous as to the meaning of P'an-ku. It is generally understood

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

773 to be the name of a person, but some scholars suggest that the two words *P'an-ku* mean "ancient times." Beyond all question the word *Ku* as written means "ancient," "antiquity," and the word *P'an*, among the many other things it means, means also "to coil," "to wind," "coiled," "winding." Thus *P'an-ku* might mean "revolving ages" and be equivalent to "long, long ago." In that case *P'an-ku k'ai t'ien, p'i ti* would mean "long, long ago heaven and earth were divided" (or formed). *Wa-ku-lo* is the Ya-ch'io name or equivalent of *P'an-ku*. *Wa* means "ten thousand" and *lo* means "old." I am not sure what *ku* means, but it is not unreasonable to suppose that it means the same here as in the name of the only woman survivor of the Flood, Ku-eh, and the same as in the Chinese name P'an-ku, that is, that it is the Chinese word *Ku* and means "ancient," "antiquity." This then would give us "Old ten thousand ages ago" as the Ya-ch'io Miao equivalent of P'an-ku. It should be noted that in the Miao language the adjectives come after nouns, and in adding the adjective "lo" they would put it after Wa-ku. Wa-ku is evidently their rendering of the Chinese P'an-ku, and lo is an addition of their own which personifies the term. Did they in former

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

773

times say "Ages long ago, heaven and earth were divided"? And in course of time, as the tradition passed from generation to generation, and the meaning of it was partly lost, did they personify the term "ages ago" by adding the word "old" to it, and thus say Wa-ku-lo, Old Wa-ku, divided heaven and earth? It seems very like it.

In all the Miao stories of the Flood, the three mentioned above and others, there are always just two survivors, a brother and sister, who became man and wife. It is interesting to note that Ovid in his Story of the Deluge knows only of two survivors, Deucalion and Pyrrha his wife, who was also his sister. This is manifest from the way Deucalion addresses her, "O soror, O coniux, O femina sola superstes." They were told by an oracle to throw the bones of their great mother behind them. When they understood that by their great mother the earth was meant, and that by bones stones were meant, they threw stones behind them. Those thrown by the man became men, and those thrown by the woman became women, and thus in Ovid's story the earth was repeopled. If it should be objected that Deucalion and Pyrrha were only cousins, it is also possible that the two Miao survivors were also cousins.

7. Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

• 773

The children of brothers among the Miao and Chinese are reckoned as brothers and sisters, and not allowed to marry.

We mentioned above that Bu-i, which almost certainly means "First Ancestor," is the Ya-ch'io Miao name for Fu-hsi, who is sometimes called the Chinese Noah. Readers may thereby be led to infer that the Chinese also have a story of Noah's Deluge, but this would be misleading. At the very dawn of Chinese history, in the days of Yao and Shuen, 2200 B.C., the "Book of History" mentions a terrible inundation which desolated the land. This must have been caused at that time by an abnormal rise of the Yellow River, and probably also by the giving way of its embankments. Subsequently this water, which covered much of the land for many years, was drawn off by the unwearied labours of Yü, who later became King and Founder of the Hsia dynasty. It was after nine years' hard work, clearing out the old and cutting new channels for the water, that the land was drained. There can be no doubt that Yao, Shuen, and Yü were historical characters, but much of what is said of them in the "Historical Books" is legendary. They were the earliest leaders of the Chinese people, and later times regarded them as ideal kings, endowing

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

773.

them with all virtue, all wisdom, and with superhuman ability.

It is not difficult in those legends of the overflow of the Yellow River to trace the legend of an earlier and more terrible flood. It is said, "In their vast extent they (the waters) embrace the mountains and over-top the hills, threatening heaven with their floods." This is very extraordinary language to use in describing an abnormal rise of the Yellow River. Dr. Legge, in his Prolegomena to the *Shu King* or "Book of History," touches on this question, and concludes by saying, "I think, therefore, that in the description of the inundation of Yao's time we have an imperfect reference to the Deluge of Noah."

Why Fu-hsi is sometimes called the Chinese Noah is not very clear. According to Chinese mythology, P'an-ku was the first man, but Fu-hsi was also the first man of another epoch, and it is worthy of note that there were ten generations between P'an-ku and Fu-hsi. The time of Fu-hsi is given as 2852 B.C. Evidently for these reasons some writers have spoken of Fu-hsi as the Chinese Noah. This opinion is confirmed by the Ya-ch'io Miao legend of Bu-i, who was beyond all doubt their Noah, and whom when speaking Chinese they call Fu-hsi.

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao AE5

who are not Christians do not pray to or worship any Supreme Being. 771

This is the more remarkable as they have the story of a Creation. The Heh Miao say Vang-vai made heaven and earth, and Zie-ne made other things, but they never worship Vang-vai or Zie-ne. The Hua Miao say that in the beginning there was no heaven and earth. There was a man named Gloe-an, and his wife Ngo-a, and these had two sons. The elder, beating about with a brass hammer, made forty-eight heavens, or a heaven in forty-eight parts. The younger son, with an iron hammer, beat about and made earth in forty-eight compartments. We never heard of them worshipping these persons. 773

All the Miao have musical festivals once or twice a year, now in one part of the country and now in another. If asked why they hold these festivals, they say that if they failed to do so their harvests would be bad; and yet they do not profess to understand how the harvests are influenced by this custom. If ever there was a religious element in their musical festivals, there does not seem to be anything religious about them now. As at present conducted they are fêtes, attended by the people from all the countryside, at which there is not 796 527

8: Graham E-5 (1921-1936) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

538 173 There is a variation of this legend which states that when the two brothers first separated they took a brass gong and broke it in two, each brother burying his piece near the grave. Later, at the official investigation, the two parts fitted together, proving their common ancestry.

The Ch'uan Miao trace their ancestry to a female ancestor called Na Bo Hmo Ntsə or the Miao mother named Ntsə.

One legend is that of P'an Ku 盤古, a great superman who with his hammer and chisel carved out the sky and the earth. The Chinese also have this legend and it is a question whether the Miao learned it from the Chinese or the Chinese from the Miao. An interesting fact is that this was not a creation of original materials but a shaping of the sky and the earth out of substances that already existed.

Savina found among the Miao of Tongkin the Biblical story of the flood, the tower of Babylon, the confusion of tongues, and a migration across northern Asia, finally reaching Tongkin. I have always suspected that the Miao of Tongkin learned these stories in recent times from Christian sources. I have not found the slightest trace of them among the Ch'uan Miao.

538 773 The story of the flood as I have learned it from Ch'uan Miao friends is as follows. Two brothers were hoeing a piece of land in order to plant a crop. Every morning when they returned to the field they found the soil turned back as it had been before they began work. One night, they kept watch to see who was doing this and saw an old man come onto the field and begin turning the soil back. When they asked for an explanation, the old man said, "It is useless for you to plant a crop. The world will be flooded and all the crops will be ruined and all the people will be drowned." Then they went and asked ʒ̄e sʌu what to do about it. He advised each of them to make a large tub or barrel and to get into it when the flood arose. So the younger brother made a wooden tub and the older brother made one of iron. When the rains descended and the floods came, each brother got into his tub. The iron tub sank and the older brother was drowned but the wooden tub floated and so the younger brother was saved.

There is a variation of this story by which a brother and a sister were saved from the flood. There were no other people on earth, but they were brother and sister and had the same name, so it was not right for them to marry. They made three tests which finally proved to their satisfaction that it was the will of Ntsə that they should marry. One of these tests was the rolling of two round stones from opposite sides of a gulch or canyon. Their stopping together was a proof of the will of Ntsə that they should marry. Savina says that in the legend as he received it, it was not

8: Graham E-5 (1921-1936) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

538 773 clear whether the two stones were two round pieces of a stonegrinder or not. The Ch'uan Miao assured me that they were not two round pieces of a stone grinder but merely two round stones and that they rolled down from opposite hill-or mountain-sides, the opposite sides of a canyon.

Another kind of legend is that which gives an explanation for Ch'uan Miao customs. There are many of them and not a few of the customs here described were first learned about in a legend. As an illustration I will tell the story of the origin of raising chickens.

A man was walking through the woods. A pheasant flew out cackling and the man found some pheasant chicks. These he took home and fed and gradually they became very tame and grew up as pets. The family liked them so much that they did not kill them and eat them. When these chicks grew up they laid eggs and hatched out more chicks which in turn grew up. This family gave some of the fowl to other families and gradually people learned to raise chickens.

538 837 There are many love songs or songs that relate the experiences of lovers, for the Ch'uan Miao have had their share of Romeos and Juliets. Some of these songs tell of love between men and their wives or between men and women whom they love and wish to marry, but probably ninety percent of the love songs tell of love affairs between married men and women who are not their wives or between married women and men who are not their husbands, or between unmarried people who do not expect to get married, and in nearly all of these cases it is stated or implied that there was sexual intercourse between them. It seems to be assumed that love between the sexes will result in sexual intercourse and the pure love song that plays such a large part in the literature of the world is hard to find.

IX. RELIGION AND WORLD VIEW

771 In my opinion the Ch'uan Miao are a very religious people, but they have no religious organization, no images of gods, and no temples. Through their daily toil, by the help of their ancestors and the gods, and through their religious ceremonies, they hope to achieve a satisfying life in which the basal needs of food, sex, protection or security, and play and amusement are satisfied. Two of the fundamentals in the Ch'uan Miao religion are belief in demons which cause disease and other calamities and for whose exorcism ceremonies are required, and the ancestral cult with its ceremonial offerings and commemoration.

[114 cont.]

121 habits. The development of the plot of the story, furthermore, will, on the whole, exhibit clearly what is considered right and what wrong. .... Material of this kind does not represent a systematic description of the ethnology of the people, but it has the merit of bringing out those points which are of interest to the people themselves. They present in a way an autobiography of the tribe." (1)

[1. Franz Boas, Tsimshian Mythology, Thirty-first Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1909-1910 (Washington, D.C., 1916), p. 393.]

As to the origin of man, stories vary according to different 121 racial groups. Among these, however, there are points of 171 similarity such as the story of the flood, the rescue of a small ● 773 number of people favored by the spirits and ghosts, marriages between brothers and sisters, and so on. There are many such stories among the Miao in Kweichow, and in several respects their central theme is rather analogous to that of similar tales among other racial groups elsewhere in the world. The following is an account of some mythological tales among the Hua Miao and the Hê Miao for the reference of ethnologists.

2. The Folklore of the Hua Miao

[115] One day two brothers finished ploughing a field. 539 The next morning they found, to their surprise, that their previous day's work was undone by some people for the field was levelled down as if it had never been ploughed. In their distress and uncertainty they had to plough the field all over again. But the second morning they found that the field was once more levelled. This was repeated four times and they were greatly

[127 cont.]

539 of the parents they were engaged in constant fights. One day the twelve brothers drank together, but the youngest brother filled his gourd with cold water and poured real wine into his brothers' cups. When they were drunk and fast asleep, he lit a pile of straw and pushed his brothers into the fire to be burned alive. After death one brother became Thunder and ascended into the sky; one became a dragon and descended into the water; one became a snake and crept into a hole; one became a tiger and hid himself deep in the woods; one became a weasel and climbed up a hill; the other six all became animals and went away in search of food. When Thunder reached heaven he thought of revenge by sending down a disastrous flood to drown his wicked brother. But the youngest brother managed to reach heaven in time and did not return to earth until after the flood had subsided. One day he met a beautiful young woman, who was his younger sister born afterwards by his mother. They married each other and soon gave birth to an eyeless and noseless monster shaped like a melon. They killed the monster, cut it into twelve pieces and abandoned them on the ground. Unexpectedly each piece of flesh became the ancestor of a Miao tribe, and the last piece was the forefather of the Short-skirt Hê Miao today.

5. Conclusion

773 171 The myths regarding the origin of man are generally alike in substance among the Hê Miao at Pa-chai, the Hua Miao and the Short-skirt Hê Miao. [128] A few points worthy of note are: first, the stories are not related to man's first ancestors after the creation, but to the resuscitation of mankind after the flood. They are not the stories of Adam and Eve but those of Noah. The story of the flood is found in the myths of all these primitive peoples. The Miao are supposed to have originally migrated from Hunan and Kiangsi, and the flood referred to in their myths was probably the legendary flood during the time

[128 cont.]

171 773 of the great Yü [who finally quelled the flood and was made an emperor]. Although their ancestors might not have lived in the flood devastated valleys, at least through contacts with the Chinese or from Chinese legends they might have gotten the stories. These referred to the use of iron knives, iron pieces, needles, and other metals. So if iron was only first used during the Ch'un Ch'iu period [spring and autumn, an historical period from 722 to 484 B.C.], this body of folklore must have originated after that period. In all these stories the surviving brother and sister eventually got married. Anthropologists have informed us that marriage between brother and sister was early tabooed among all ethnic groups, and that violations were considered serious perversions of nature and human relationship. Among the royal families in ancient Egypt, Peru, Japan and India such marriages were permitted at first to preserve the purity of the royal blood, but soon this custom was abolished. The incestuous marriages in the Miao myths have shown that the sisters were the unwilling parties, who yielded only after much persuasion and reluctance. It is apparent that at the time these mythological tales became current, unions between brothers and sisters were no longer in vogue or already under ban. Otherwise, there is no reason why these marriages should be consummated only after the fulfillment of some impossible conditions. According to eugenic reports marriages within the family are detrimental to the offspring. The children born of a marriage between brother and sister may have the beautiful looks of Cleopatra of ancient Egypt, but statistically considered they are in the majority weak of mind and body. In the mythologies of the Hê Miao and Hua Miao, the children of such marriages were all crippled monsters. Among the Ya-ch'ieh Miao there is a similar story, in which the offspring was not only without four limbs but also dumb. This genetical fact had already been noticed by these primitive peoples. We do not know whether there was ever a custom among the Chinese of marriage between brother and sister, but in any case at the Ch'un Ch'iu period incestuous marriage [129] was banned because of its "non-productivity" and "disease-giving

[129 cont.]

171 773 nature." The reform in the Miao marriage system probably did not antedate the reform in the Chinese marriage system. This also attests to the fact that their mythologies were shaped after the Ch'un Ch'iu period, or at least that they underwent many changes later.

174 From these myths we can gather some material regarding the origin of fire. We know that fire used by the primitive people originated from natural sources, such as forest fires resulting from lightning, fire from volcanoes, and other causes such as spontaneous combustion of withered leaves. This kind of natural fire was preserved and used by man. Later, man learned how to obtain fire through artificial means and the use of fire became more extensive. There were two methods of obtaining fire, one by striking an object and the other through friction. Which of these methods came first is a question not yet satisfactorily solved. American anthropologists have abundant material from the American Indians to show that the method of friction preceded the method of striking. According to the mythology of 174 372 the Hua Miao, fire was obtained by hitting a piece of iron against a rock, which is clearly the method of striking. Of course it does not have to depend upon a piece of metal. In fact the making of fire through artificial means long antedated the iron age. Flints hitting each other could always yield sparks of fire, and the story of the metal piece was evidently introduced later by the Miao. In any case they provide an evidence that with the Miao striking preceded friction in making fire. At the same time it illustrates that the development of fire varied with localities, and did not necessarily follow a definite procedure as held by the classical school. This is a point in anthropology worthy of our attention.

114 (This article was first published in the "She-hui hsün-k'an" [Social Studies, a publication appearing every ten days], Nos. 4-5, of the Kwei-yang Ke-ming Jih-pao [Kwei-yang Revolutionary Times], May 19, 1938, and has been slightly revised in its present form.)

[133 cont.]

105 7. In marriage cattle are used as betrothal gifts. Men may have two or three wives.

8. According to their customs marriage between cousins is a matter of course.

9. Their men and women are used to premarital affairs.

10. When a woman dies after marriage her parents are entitled to "bone money" from her husband.

11. The aged are weary of life and willing to be buried alive. This is in line with the ancient story of taking one's life on completing the cycle of sixty years.

[134]

12. They still have a "black-ear" slave system.

13. Every village has a village head, and in case of urgent events announcements are made by sending out wooden tablets.

14. Huan-ku-chang [lit., to settle an old account] is an important festival occasion, celebrated with beef or pork.

15. There is current a story of "the changed woman."

2. Three Versions of Their Ancestral Myth

121 What was the origin of the ancestors of man? Every
● 773 ethnic group has its own hereditary myth, which in modern mythology is known as the ancestral myth. The ancestral myth of whatever group is always an account of inconceivable miraculous events, from which, however, we can have a glimpse into the infantile psychology and the living condition of the primitive people as well as their conceptions of the universe, creation, and ancestors. Therefore, when an ethnologist is lucky enough to acquire the ancestral myth of an ethnic group he has a very valuable material in his possession. When
773 the present writer went to the Sheng Miao area at Hsia-chiang to make a systematic investigation he gathered a great deal of material worthy of study especially the original regarding their ancestors. The Sheng Miao are the most primitive among

[134 cont.]

773 the Miao, and this mythology is therefore the oldest and the most important.

As far as the present writer is aware, the ancestral myths of the different Miao tribes vary slightly, but that of the Sheng Miao is especially interesting. Disregarding the irrationality of these strange events, we have to recognize the fact that with the simple, ignorant people mythology is their living history. This kind of myth came from an unknown period in ancient times, that is, the mythical period. If we ask the Sheng Miao about their myth, they would say that they "do not understand" or that "it was handed down from generation to generation by their ancestors since the remotest times." They have long since forgotten [135] its origin. Some of the Sheng Miao are specially 773 entrusted with the duty of preserving and passing on such tales, 888 and they are generally well-known leaders or aged people with good memories. Young men and women know a little about these stories, but cannot tell them entirely. These mythical tales are not told for recreation, as ordinary stories and as a rule they are not commonly heard. We know that with the primitive people experience is very important. The young people usually listen to the words and warnings of the aged, who become automatically their guardians and leaders. With the Sheng Miao it is the same. The old people are the custodians of all their knowledge and wisdom. The fact that they can recount their ancestral myths entitles them to special respect. The telling of myths is a special occasion, from which outsiders are not often excluded. If we compel them to tell the stories, they would find excuses or else would not do a thorough job for fear that they may be ridiculed.

627 In every Sheng Miao village there is a set of rules and 773 regulations which are voluntarily observed. In case of violation the offense is quickly adjudged by the public and an elder is invited to execute the punishment. Before it is carried out, however, he would tell the accused in a solemn manner the myths of their ancestors. Also in the case of a serious dispute the elder would summon both parties together, and first tell them the story of their ancestors before settling the dispute.

[135 cont.]

627 After a decision is rendered in this fashion both parties would
773 show compliance and would not carry the case to the law courts.
● Although the mythology handed down from mouth to mouth does not have religious contents, it becomes a kind of prophecy to those people who hold everything pertaining to their ancestors in the highest respect. It is entirely due to this inherent respect for their ancestors that the ancestral myth is recounted before carrying out the punishment or at the time of settling a dispute. The idea is to employ the will of the ancestors to restrain the actions of their descendants. It is interesting to note that the mythology of the Sheng Miao, meant originally to inform posterity of the stories of their ancestors' life, has also assumed the corrective and preventive functions of law.

773 [136] The ancestral myth recorded by this writer consists
538 of three versions, which are scattered over every corner of the Sheng Miao area. Although these versions show some variance, they have the same origin. The original mythology of all ethnic groups is told in verses or songs so that they can be remembered easily by posterity. The first two versions of the ancestral myth are told by the Sheng Miao as prose stories due to the disappearance of the poetical versions in the course of time. The third version is a song sung by the Sheng Miao, and few indeed are those elders in the whole area who can sing the song in its entirety. It therefore still retains all its simple primitive character. The whole song has 488 lines and represents the pure myth of the Sheng Miao regarding the origin of man. The three versions are given as follows.

The First Version

539 There was an old woman who descended from heaven to the earth with a melon seed. She planted this seed on the top of a mountain range. After three days the seed sprouted and the vine extended to more than two feet. After seven days the melon plant covered the whole mountain, yielding many large melons. Among the melons there was the melon king so large that it could accommodate several dozen persons inside. It

[144 cont.]

539 From this wedlock came a son,
Without eyes and without ears, --
No more, no less, like a melon he looked --
And the parents were all in tears.

En cut the monster into lumps,
And tossed them around high and low,
They became the Sui-chia and the Chuang,
And the Nine Tribes.

All the people in the world
Were originally unable to speak;
They knew not how to eat rice
Or to enjoy the joys of sex.

En boiled some beans to eat as rice,
And soon he broke wind.
The Han [Chinese] cried "ch'ih-fan";
The Tung, "chi-kou";

The Miao, "no-nüeh";
All meaning "eating rice."
After this the Han, Miao, and Tung,
They all had speech.

3. Conclusions

773 Based on these three versions of the Miao myth, the following points deserve attention.

1. It is without doubt that though superficially the three versions seem different, they actually originate from the same story, altered here and there by later story-tellers. The common theme of these versions is: "Once in ancient times there was a flood, which destroyed all mankind except a brother and sister, who escaped from the disaster. After the flood had subsided, brother and sister were forced to marry each other. They bore a son who looked like a melon. In anger the father cut it into

[144 cont.]

773 pieces and tossed them around, which became the different racial groups today." This kind of myth is not a special story of the Sheng Miao as the other Miao groups investigated by the writer have similar versions. That it is a common ancestral myth of the Miao is worthy of our notice.

2. The earliest people, according to the three versions, were a brother and sister. The first version does not give their names. The second and the third versions give En as the name of the brother and Mei as that of the sister. Probably in ancient stories only these two names were given. After their marriage they procreated different groups of the human race. En and Mei were the original ancestors of mankind. The ethnic groups in China today, the Chinese, the Miao, the Tung, the Sui-chia, the Chuang, and the Yao all came from a common ancestry. That the Sheng Miao mythology contains this unexpected scientific view of the "common origin of man" is also worth noticing.

3. We understand that totemism is a necessary stage in the development of all races. The myth of a common ancestral birth must be associated somehow with totemism, such as the Chinese myth relating to the birth of Shang [founder of Shang or Yin, the first historical Chinese dynasty] from a black bird. The story in the third version regarding two big insects that laid five eggs, which became Dragon, Tiger, Snake, Thunder, En and Mei, shows that the Sheng Miao had already come into contact with totemism. The second version also states that a certain couple had six children, Dragon, Tiger, Snake, Thunder, En and Mei. The Sheng Miao have no inhibition at all in identifying their ancestry with animals. Truly according to modern biological [146] studies, men and animals were originally related, and the Sheng Miao have shown this conception in their mythology. Again, in the above myth, not only 773 778 was En a supernatural being who could ascend to heaven and descend to earth with ease, but natural objects such as thunder and rocks, and animals such as dragon, snake, tiger, rat, insects, birds, eagle, monkey, cat and goose were all personified. The ancient belief that they are endowed with human will and intelligence, capable of speaking and taking

[146 cont.]
773 part in other activities still remains with the Sheng Miao today.
776 Thunder, dragon, tiger, and rocks are all important objects of worship, to which they sacrifice devoutly as if these were gods. Thunder especially is considered as a majestic god, and every
[821] time when thunder roars in the heavens they would immediately stop work and inquire who has provoked his anger for fear that the dreaded flood in their mythology would descend upon them again. Every year during the time of spring thunder, there is
[796] held a special ritual called "genhou," when all work is stopped for three days to avert the disaster from heaven.

4. The story of a monstrous birth through incestuous mar-
171 riage which serves to limit consanguineous marriage, is com-
773 mon with most primitive peoples. The foregoing myth also tells of a melon-shaped child born of a wedlock between En and Mei, who are brother and sister. It is conceded by many historians that marriages among the earliest peoples were incestuous. In the mythology of the Sheng Miao the brother and sister got married because mankind was destroyed by the flood, and they had no alternative but to marry each other even though they were fully aware of the impropriety of the union. The marriage was advised by an old dame and a little insect, who told them to proceed from opposite directions, each holding an umbrella and with leaves covering up their eyes, and upon meeting, to call each other "lao piao" [lit., old cousin]. In a similar way when a brother and sister among the savage people of Polynesia are united in marriage, they call each other "pu-na-lu-ya" (dear ones) instead of brother and sister. [147] Nevertheless it was an incestuous marriage, and the melon child was the result. The fact that today there is still such a conception among
773 the Sheng Miao shows the existence of this marriage system in the past. Although they now avoid marriages between the same surnames and between people of the same village, the
[177] acquisition of their surnames from the Chinese is comparatively
[551] of recent origin. Moreover, their acceptance of marriages
[588] between cousins makes us suspect that there are still cases of incestuous union among them.

[147 cont.]

5. In the above three stories, there are intimations of the 773 enmity between the various tribal groups and the origin of the ill-feeling between them. For instance in the first version the sons of the Miao king and the Han king struggled for the possession of land; the former who were clumsy and ignorant were taken advantage of by the latter, who were shrewd and cunning. In the second and third versions, the story of the brothers Thunder and En fighting repeatedly for the field, the former violent and belligerent, and the latter wicked and deceitful, possess the same significance. The most interesting 773 part of the first version has to do with the acquisition of a large 829 area of land by the Han king and the subsequent convention at Tu-shan, in which the Chinese acquired a pen and was able to read, write and become officials, whereas the Miao king lost ground and retired to the mountains with the chicken feet left over from the meeting, and could only work hard by ploughing the field in the mountains. This is given as the reason why at present the Chinese are successful and the Miao are retarded.

6. The amusing section in the second and the third versions 773 as to how the different tribes began to talk should interest the linguists. When En tossed the pieces of flesh around, the human beings coming out of them were at first unable to speak. In the second version En happened to burn the bamboo. In the third version he broke wind after a bean meal; both the noises of breaking wind and cracking bamboo stirred the human beings into talking. They spoke three different languages which became those of the Tung, the Miao and the Chinese. I wonder whether this would explain that at the time of human origin the differences between the races were due to the differences in languages. Furthermore, the earliest vocabulary of all races was related to food matters. In the third version, [148] the first words they uttered such as "ch'ih-fan" by the Chinese, "chi-kou" by the Tung, and "no-nüeh" by the Miao all have the same meaning of "eating rice" in different pronunciations. This is just like our teething infants who upon learning to speak, first learn the words "ch'ih-fan." How thought-provoking all this is!

[184 cont.]

796 invoke a prosperous harvest. In the afternoon every family contributes a few dimes for the purchase of vegetables and sends a representative to the party, at which rules and regulations are [685] discussed regarding indemnities for damages to crops. He who [212] can write is asked to list the rules on a piece of white paper to be affixed at the village gate. Then on the top of a high mound near the village they set up a straw mark and let loose a din of firecrackers to announce to villages far and near that this village has already passed its laws so that none may go there to violate them.

On this day[A] the number of people making sacrifices before 769 the Earth God temple among the Chung-chia is also large, but 796 in addition each family has to prepare separate glutinous rice dumplings and a chicken for sacrifice to the ancestors. In the afternoon the children would bring dumplings and chicken legs to some nearby river banks to enjoy themselves. Toward evening they would wash their hands and feet in the river before coming home, and this is called "the first wash."

The Seventh Month. The first dragon day of this month is the "new crop festival." On this day all the children of the Hua Miao and Ch'ing Miao [185] wear new clothes. In the morning they would go to the field, each plucking three bunches of grain stalks, which they cook in rice. They also cook a few ears of corn with some blue fish for sacrifice to the ancestors. After the ritual the whole family would sit down to a meal of new rice and 796 corn. The custom of the Chung-chia is similar, except that [231] after the sacrifice the new rice and corn are first fed to the dog of the house before they are eaten by men. According to their [773] tradition, it is said that at the time of creation there was no rice in the world, and that a dog brought the seed from heaven for men to plant. It was only then that people had rice for food. So on the "new crop day" each year rice is first fed to the dog to show that his benefaction has not been forgotten. Among the Chung-chia there is another superstition: from the "new crop day" to the time of the autumn harvest no one in the house, old or young, may sit on the doorsill so as to avoid misfortune.

[A] [i.e. the sixth day of the sixth month.--Analyst]

[168 cont.]

764 which includes the relatives and friends, set off firecrackers and rifle shots. (The "Méo" women do not participate in the funeral ceremonies.) After the body has been placed in the grave, the trench is completely filled in, and above it is built a little mound, often covered with flat stones on which the stretcher is broken that served to carry the deceased. The cortège then returns to the house of death, where the feasts are resumed until the provisions prepared have been exhausted.

No further attention is paid to the dead. In the region of Pha-Long, one of the children of the deceased brings a little food to the grave for two or three days immediately after the funeral, and that is all. (Photos 198 and 199, Plate 42, represent the funeral of a rich "Méo" who was "ly-truong" of the commune of Pha-Long. Except in the matter of the coffin, made in this case with great care of unrottable planks, in the Chinese manner, the ceremony was just as simple as for a poor "Méo.")

765 Mourning is marked by the wearing of a white turban.

The "Méo," properly speaking, have no religion and evince
771 the same spirit of independence toward the gods as toward man. In the same way, as we have already pointed out, they do not even practice ancestral worship except in the vaguest manner. The an-
769 cestral altar consists generally of one or several bands of red paper,
768 glued to a partition in the hall of honor. Below these there is a small table holding a bowl full of sand, into which is stuck, from time to time, a stick of lighted incense.

The worship amounts to a few invocations and the offering of food, when a feast is held in the house.

The "Méo" recognize the spirit of the heavens ("Tô"), of the
776 earth ("Ang"), of the mountains ("sien-chen"), of the thunder ("lu-chen"), of the waters (the dragon "Long-wang"), and the spirits of the hearth ("tsao-chen").

The "Méo" are acquainted with the legend of the flood which
773 we have already told: a single couple, brother and sister, surviving the cataclysm, whose incestuous union produced a calabash. The seeds of this calabash gave birth to man kind.

That which especially characterizes the "Méo" is that, al-
776 though they believe in the existence of evil spirits, capable of

Miao AES

/167 cont./

776 [829] [773] know the deities of the neighboring tribes, but that they neither fear or revere them. The memory of the heroes of ancient times has also been lost. Thus they do not know who brought them their cultural goods, for instance, fire (for the spirit ta ho lu pin merely has to watch over the fire!), nor to whom they owe their social institutions.

In general the Meau do not know of any hierarchy of the spirits. It is of no consequence, for instance, that the teacher-spirit of the smithy has two assistant spirits whereas the spirit helping the doctor acts without any. All these spirits are more or less neutral in relation to one another and equal in rank, even when they appear as spirit pairs.

231 776 There are also /168/ spirits that are intentionally created by human beings. Among animals, dogs are the best friends of the Meau, and even the small child chooses the dog as his playmate, believing that it directly understands him. The adult Meau also appreciates the watchfulness of the dog, which guards the house against evil persons. Hence it is easy to understand how the conception arose that a dead dog would become a guardian spirit, who in the realm of the spirits, who live so much like human beings, would play a role similar to that of [775] the adult, live dog in the realm of human beings. This guardian-spirit dog protects the houses of the Meau against evil spirits. In order to create such a spirit a dog is killed in a prescribed manner. Since it is believed that the dog's age does not matter and that a newborn dog fulfills the same purpose as a full-grown animal, a newborn dog is, of course, usually selected for the guardian spirit. It will also carry out its task as a full-grown watchdog in the other world. The dog selected, usually a young dog, is killed either by hanging it from a noose and letting it struggle to death or by cutting its throat (Ill. 101).[1] Such a [782] killing therefore does not represent a sacrifice, but the creation of a guardian spirit.

1 [See cat. 116, p 666 - ANALYST]

/168 cont./

231 776 [731] [789] [243] If a village is plagued by many sicknesses, the Meau erect a symbolic gate out of three crossbeams about 40 or 50 meters from the village on the path leading to their settlement. Here the dog is hanged, and it is assumed that henceforth, as a guardian spirit, it will seek to prevent evil spirits from treading the paths that lead into the village. The same procedure is followed before laying out a new rice field.

[764] [775] In addition the Meau practice in different ways the custom of killing a dog when a human being dies; as a spirit it is supposed to guide the soul of the deceased into the other world.

776 My informant explained to me that over this whole host of spirits there stands only one spirit to whom they all, even the ancestors, are subject, "as to a king." He is invisible like all the other spirits, but in contrast to the latter he does not have human form, and lives simultaneously in heaven and in the earth, he is omnipresent. This chief spirit or, if one prefers, "high god" of the Meau, is bisexual, that is, male and female at the same time. He is the "Father and Mother spirit" of the Meau, who call him nă thu pen do nă thu /169/ pẹ̆ dŏ. Savina (1)

[114] [773]

1. II, p. 243.

gives his name as Ndo Chu or Chu Lau and maintains that this chief spirit, according to Meau belief, created the world. I was unable to find any confirmation for this notion, however.

It is not his affair to determine birth and death, but he is turned to when especially important reasons come up, for instance, when evil spirits are to be fought, and therefore especially in the case of epidemics and similar events. The animals of the forest are likewise under the jurisdiction of the high Father-Mother spirit. Therefore, the hunters must turn to him with their request for rich booty.

[931] [825] [224] [993] The Meau told me that human beings do not know who created the world (concerning the legends about this, see the chapter, "Myths and Fairy Tales"). They also do not know who makes lightning and thunder and do not have any clear conception as to the origin of these natural phenomena. They presume, however, that they are linked with the actions of the

[821] [626]

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/219 cont./

A 784 All these prohibitions are in force for all the Akha who are in a situation connected with a taboo, for instance, pregnancy or sickness. There is no taboo that embraces social or political groups.

Every taboo is strictly observed. Transgression do occur, A of course, but only through carelessness. The transgressor always [688] hastens to the shaman and immediately tells him what has hap- [787] pened, whereupon the shaman questions the offended spirit as to [756] the form of expiation required of the transgressor.

The prohibition that strangers may not walk about alone A in the village borders on taboo. I was told that such an act of- 123 fends the spirits, whose wrath is then felt, not by the stranger, 609 but by the inhabitants of the village. I had the impression, how- 784 ever, that this was more a pretext to prevent our investigations in the villages, since it was apparently disagreeable to the Akha A to be watched by us. I therefore, for example, had to take my [126] photographs with telescopic Tessar lenses from a great distance.

A If one tries to obtain an explanation for the taboos, the 178 answer is always: "Because the spirits wish it and our /220/ an- 784 cestors did so." The prohibitions were therefore handed down [756] from ancient times and cannot be modified or moderated by the shamans, just as they likewise do not have the power to create new taboos.

A As numerous as the taboo rules are, the Akha, too, do not 779 have any totemistic conceptions in any form.

/221/

Chapter 10

Myths and Fairy Tales

M Undoubtedly myths and fairy tales must be present in 114 considerable numbers among all the mountain peoples of Farther 538 India. Nevertheless, relatively few became known to me from 773 the Meau in Thailand, and even in the literature I was able to find little about the fund of Meau myths.

/221 cont./

182 538 773 Especially among a people as mentally alert and of such high standing as the Meau, one can probably see in this fact an indication that we have here an economically-conditioned cultural loss. Poetry, like every free artistic activity, requires not only mental ability, but also security in the basic conditions of life. That the mental ability in any case is present among the Meau is attested to, in addition to the communications from Savina, by both the mental development of the children and, above all, the spiritual culture which both the Meau and the Akha have developed. People who need all their strength in order merely, with the hardest work, to avoid starvation, however, cannot possibly have the energy required for poetic invention. Traditional lore maintains itself longer, but it, too, disappears if there is not sufficient time and leisure to cultivate it.

773 [184] Nevertheless, among the Meau in Thailand I was able to record a number of legends which often are identical to a great extent with the corresponding myths and tales that other authors have recorded among the Meau in Tonkin. Accordingly, I am presenting the recorded material in the grouping most useful for comparative purposes. Concerning /222/ the origin of the human race, the following was reported to me:

In the beginning the earth was flooded by the ocean. When the water had gradually created its own pathways and earth became visible, a pair of siblings was living there. The brother impregnated the sister, and she gave birth to a gourd, which instead of seeds contained germ cells from which, in the course of time, human beings developed.

539 Lajonquière (1) and Abadie (2) also describe this episode,

1. II, p. 314.

2. Page 168.

but these authors state that the Meau have knowledge of the Deluge and the siblings were the only survivors of this natural catastrophe. Savina (3) also described the creation of human beings:

3. II, p. 244.